

Weekly Report
April 7, 2023

GOVERNOR:

Governor Honors the 200th Anniversary of the Texas Rangers – On March 30th, Governor Greg Abbott celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Texas Rangers division within the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) at the Texas Rangers Major League Baseball (MLB) team's 2023 opening day first pitch ceremony at Globe Life Field in Arlington. Governor Abbott said, "Since brave pioneers first settled the Old West, the Texas Rangers have been a hallmark of the story of Texas. From crime scene specialists to subject matter and cold case experts, the Texas Rangers play a pivotal role in bringing justice for Texans today, as they have for two centuries. The Texas Rangers continue to have a tremendous impact on our communities, and I am proud to join their namesake baseball team today as we honor their integral role in establishing the Texas legend." The governor was honored to be joined at the first pitch ceremony by former U.S. President George W. Bush, former Texas Rangers Pitcher and Team President Nolan Ryan, former Texas Rangers Catcher Iván "Pudge" Rodríguez, and DPS Lieutenant Reuben T. Mankin, who threw the first pitch.

Established in 1823, the Texas Rangers is a major division within DPS, with lead investigative responsibility for major violent crimes, unsolved violent crimes, serial criminals, public corruption, public integrity offenses, and officer-involved shootings. The division is also responsible for the state's border security operations program and DPS tactical operations.

Governor Discusses the Texas Economy in Corpus Christi – On April 3rd, Governor Greg Abbott celebrated the Texas economy for leading the nation in innovation and job creation at the United Corpus Christi Chamber luncheon. Addressing an audience of local business leaders, the governor laid out his agenda to ensure Texas remains number one in America and highlighted trailblazing companies like Tesla that are expanding operations in the Coastal Bend region of South Texas. Governor Abbott said, "Tesla's decision to locate here shows that the hard work and determination of the people in this room has led to the greater Corpus Christi area being a key destination for business. Success doesn't just happen. It is the result of years of tireless work. Because of your efforts, Corpus Christi is a huge economic success. The Port of Corpus Christi is the largest energy export gateway. Texas is the energy capital of the world, but we couldn't fulfill that role without the Port of Corpus Christi. The more than 98,000 port-related jobs in this area provide good-paying careers for Texans helping fuel the world." During the luncheon, Governor Abbott detailed current legislative priorities that will support the ongoing success of Texas' juggernaut economy, such as cutting property taxes, fortifying the state's power grid, bolstering infrastructure projects, and curtailing burdensome regulations. The governor was joined at the luncheon by Representative Todd Hunter, Corpus

Christi Mayor Paulette Guajardo, Nueces County Judge Connie Scott, and United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive Officer Al Arreola.

Governor Designated April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month – On April 3rd, Governor Greg Abbott encouraged Texans to help raise awareness of sexual assault and recognize the courage of survivors across the state and nation throughout the month of April 2023, following his proclamation designating April 2023 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Texas. The proclamation said, "I encourage all Texans to join me in the ongoing movement to prevent sexual assault. Our people have been long defined by a desire to help those in need, and we must embrace this spirit and press onward to a brighter tomorrow free from sexual assault. There has never been a challenge that the sons and daughters of Texas could not overcome, and by working together, we can affirm the worth and dignity of the most vulnerable, facilitate healing for survivors, and bring offenders to justice." Texans are encouraged to honor survivors as the State of Texas continues its mission to promote healing and empowerment for survivors of sexual violence.

[View the proclamation.](#)

Governor Attends Ribbon Cutting at Texas Bankers Association – On April 4th, Governor Greg Abbott commended Texas banking institutions for helping provide support to Texas communities as a financial backbone at a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Texas Bankers Association (TBA) headquarters building in Austin. During the ceremony, Governor Abbott thanked TBA's 400 member banking institutions for their work to ensure entrepreneurs across the state have the financial resources needed to succeed. Governor Abbott said, "Members of the Texas Bankers Association are a critical part of our booming economy. These institutions serve as the financial backbone of many Texas communities and are a big part of the Texas economic juggernaut. Our economy is great for all Texans. With our strong, pro-growth economic agenda, we will remain the economic envy of America. I congratulate you on your new building and welcome you to the neighborhood."

SENATE:

The Senate was in session Monday through Thursday this week.

On Monday, the Senate passed 43 bills on its first Local & Uncontested Calendar of the session. They passed eight bills from the Intent Calendar including:

- **SB 28** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would establish the **New Water Supply for Texas Fund** to finance projects that will lead to the acquisition or creation of seven million acre-feet of new water supplies by December 31, 2033. *The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*

- **SB 224** by Carol Alvarado (D-Houston) would presume that an actor in possession of property consisting of two or more **catalytic converters** that have been removed from two or more motor vehicles. *The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 375** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) is the redistricting bill for **Texas Senate districts**. *It passed by a vote of 23 to 7.*
- **SB 1414** by Nathan Johnson (D-Dallas) is the **sunset** bill for **veterinary medicine practice** by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1598** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) would add one Senate member and one House member to the **Homeland Security Council**. *It passed by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **SJR 75** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would propose a constitutional amendment creating the **Texas Water Fund** to assist in financing water projects. *The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*

About SB 28, Lt. Governor Dan Patrick said, “As Texas’ economy grows and leads America into the 21st century, our state’s water needs will outpace our supply. Additionally, the Texas Water Development Board estimates that 70% of our water line infrastructure is nearing, at, or beyond the end of its life expectancy. SB 28 is one of my top priorities because Texas cannot wait to address this growing problem. Due to our unprecedented budget surplus, the time is now for us to make this investment in our future.”

The Senate also gave preliminary approval to:

- **SB 14** by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would prohibit medical professionals from providing **gender transitioning medical interventions to a child** under 18. *Two floor amendments were adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 19 to 11. On April 4th, it passed by a vote of 19 to 12.*

About SB 14, Lt. Governor Dan Patrick said, “As Lt. Governor, I believe the practice of child gender modification is abhorrent and must be stopped in Texas. The Senate and I have been committed to banning the practice of child gender modification and, last session, the Senate passed two bills, SB 1646, by Senator Charles Perry (R-Lubbock), and SB 1311, by Senator Bob Hall (R-Edgewood), but neither bill received a hearing in the House and they both died. That is why SB 14 is one of my top priorities this session. SB 14 prohibits physicians and health care providers from performing sex change surgeries or prescribing puberty blockers to minors unless medically necessary and requires the Texas Medical Board to revoke the license of a physician who provides the prohibited sex change surgery or drugs. Additionally, SB 14 prohibits public money from being used or distributed to providers, medical schools, hospitals, or physicians who provide these surgeries or drugs.”

On Tuesday, the Senate gave final approval to SB 14 and passed 17 bills including:

- **SB 361** by Sarah Eckhardt (D-Austin) would allow teachers to serve on an **appraisal review board**. *It passed by a vote of 29 to 2.*
- **SB 459** by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would require institutions of higher education that provide **early registration** for courses or programs for any group of students, to provide early registration to **parenting students**. *It passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 541** by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would require the comptroller to bar a vendor from participation in a state contract and require political subdivisions to bar a vendor if the **vendor is prohibited from participating in federal contracts** or who is designated as a risk to state security by the governor with advice from the Homeland Security Council. *The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1191** by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require the chief appraiser to accept an **application for appraisal of land as open-space land** following the death of the owner of the land if the application is filed before the delinquency date by the surviving spouse or child of the former owner or the executor of the estate of the former owner. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1381** by Sarah Eckhardt (D-Austin) would allow the **surviving spouse** of a person with a **homestead exemption** to not have to apply for a homestead exemption when the spouse dies if the surviving spouse is otherwise eligible for the exemption. *It passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1486** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would require tax collectors to accept an **electronic payment** of taxes. *It passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1910** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would clarify that **election information** related to a general, primary, or special election is not exempt from the **Texas Public Information Act**. *It passed by a vote of 23 to 8.*
- **SB 2010** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would require the **Independent Market Monitor** to report all potential market manipulations and all discovered or potential violations of Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) or ERCOT rules to be delivered in writing to PUC staff and requires the PUC to produce public annual reports. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 2011** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would update **Voluntary Mitigation Plan** (VMP) requirements to ensure such plans provide meaningful protections against market power abuses. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 2013** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would harden security of the electric grid by allowing background checks for sensitive positions at ERCOT; and requiring business entities granted direct or remote access to critical infrastructure to take reasonable and necessary security actions. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*

- **SB 2014** by Phil King (R-Weatherford) would **eliminate** the renewable energy mandate and related **subsidy for renewable energy**; and would eliminate the requirement for load-serving entities to purchase renewable energy credits. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **SB 2091** by Royce West (D-Dallas) would allow a taxing unit to sell **seized or foreclosed property** that is landlocked or is a narrow strip of land that cannot be used independently under its current zoning classification ordinance to an abutting property owner, without the need for a public sale. *It passed by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **SB 2355** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would remove the requirement that a **request for binding arbitration** and required deposit be filed with the **appraisal district**, but would allow them to be filed directly with the comptroller. *It passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*

The Senate also gave preliminary approval to:

- **SB 12** by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would prohibit a municipality from authorizing a **sexually oriented performance** on public property or in the presence of a child. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 21 to 10. On April 5th, it passed by a vote of 20 to 11.*
- **SB 20** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would prohibit **prosecuting attorneys** from adopting and enforcing a policy of prohibiting or demonstrating a pattern of limiting or prohibiting the **enforcement of a criminal offense**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 21 to 10. On April 5th, it passed by a vote of 20 to 11.*
- **SB 21** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would shorten the time frame for investigating complaints filed with the **State Commission on Judicial Conduct**. *The committee substitute and three floor amendments were adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 21 to 10. On April 5th, it passed by a vote of 21 to 10.*
- **SB 959** by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would add **open-enrollment charter schools** to the definition of “governmental entity” for purposes of laws prohibiting governmental entities from **assisting a person in obtaining an abortion**. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 19 to 12. On April 5th, it passed by a vote of 19 to 12.*
- **SB 1287** by Phil King (R-Weatherford) would require the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) to establish a cost cap for **generation interconnection costs** to reduce transmission costs for consumers. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 19 to 12. On April 5th, it passed by a vote of 19 to 12.*
- **SB 1601** by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would prohibit a **municipal library** that hosts an **event** at which a **man presents as a woman** or a woman presenting as a man reads a book or story to a minor from receiving state

funds. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 20 to 9. On April 5th, it passed by a vote of 19 to 10.*

- **SB 2015** by Phil King (R-Weatherford) would create a **goal** of 50 percent **dispatchable energy** for the ERCOT grid to level the playing field between dispatchable and renewable generation. *The committee substitute as adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 21 to 10. On April 5th, it passed by a vote of 20 to 11.*

About SB 12, Senator Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) said, “SB 12 is about protecting children. Surely we can all agree that children should not be exposed to sexually explicit performances. This common-sense legislation protects a child’s innocence and aligns Texas law with Texas values. Recently, we have seen a dramatic increase in sexually-oriented drag shows in front of children. SB 12 makes it clear that Texas will protect children from sexual performances.”

About SB 12, Lt. Governor Dan Patrick said, “It is shocking to me that any parent would allow their young child to be sexualized by drag shows. Children, who cannot make decisions on their own, must be protected from these sexually-oriented drag shows now occurring more and more in front of them. I selected SB 12 to be a top priority of mine because someone must fight back against the radical Left’s degradation of our society and values. I will not allow Texas children to be sexualized and scarred for life by harmful drag performances.”

About SB 20 and SB21, Lt. Governor Dan Patrick said, “Texans unapologetically believe in the rule of law and expect their judges and district attorneys to follow Texas law. SB 20 and SB 21 are two of my top priorities this session because it is unacceptable that rogue district attorneys and judges, primarily in big cities, are not following our laws. These bills send a clear message that their delinquent behavior will not be tolerated. SB 20, by Senator Joan Huffman, prohibits district or county attorneys with criminal jurisdiction from refusing to prosecute any type of criminal offense. SB 20 also provides that a policy of non-prosecution constitutes official misconduct and is grounds for removal. SB 21, by Senator Joan Huffman, clarifies that a judge’s ‘persistent or willful violation’ of the law for setting bail is grounds for removal.”

About SB 1601, Lt. Governor Dan Patrick said, “The radical Left’s attempt to sexualize and indoctrinate Texas children is never-ending. It is infuriating and unfathomable that public money has been used to fund drag queen story hour in Texas libraries. The Senate’s passage of SB 1601 is of utmost importance to put a stop to the sexualization of our children.”

On Wednesday, the Senate gave final approval to SB 12, SB 20, SB 21, SB 959, SB 1287, SB 1601, and 2015, and 25 additional bills passed:

- **SB 6** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would establish the **Texas Energy Insurance Program**, outside of the competitive market, to operate 10,000 megawatts of natural gas or similar sources to ensure sufficient power is available at all times; and would create a low interest loan program to maintain older dispatchable generation plants. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 22 to 9.*

- **SB 7** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would create a new **ancillary service for dispatchable generators** and a calculation that the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) can use to require generation to firm up to be more reliable. *The committee substitute and three floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 23** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would establish a 10-year mandatory minimum sentence for the **use of a firearm** in the commission of the most severe **felony offenses**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **SB 426** by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would prohibit an official, employee, or agent of the state from prohibiting or restricting a physician from prescribing, administering, or **dispensing for off-label use**, a prescription drug to treat a patient who is exposed to or **diagnosed with COVID-19**. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **SB 602** by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would clarify that a **border patrol agent** of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection is not a peace officer, but has the **powers of arrest and search and seizure** under state and federal laws. *The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **SB 798** by Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would prohibit the qualifications for certification as a **school counselor** from including a requirement that a candidate for certification have experience as a classroom teacher. *It passed by a vote of 24 to 7.*
- **SB 821** by Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) would require the Sunset Advisory Commission to review, as part of its review of a **state agency** whether the agency **sells personal data** and to whom the personal data is sold. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1003** by Nathan Johnson (D-Dallas) would require **health care provider directories** maintained by health benefit plans to include nurse midwives, surgical assistants, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, and any other specialty identified by the Commissioner of Insurance. *It passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1015** by Phil King (R-Weatherford) would allow an **electric utility** to file a request for a **periodic rate adjustment** on any day the Public Utility Commission is open for business, and would require the commission to enter a final order on a request for a periodic rate adjustment within 60 days after the request is filed. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1017** by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would prohibit political subdivisions from adopting an ordinance that limits access to an energy source or that results in the effective prohibition of a wholesaler, retailer, energy producer, or related infrastructure that is necessary to provide **access to a specific energy source**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 29 to 2.*

- **SB 1216** by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would allow **judges** of a constitutional county court, a statutory county court, or a statutory probate court who have a **license to carry a handgun** to carry a gun in otherwise prohibited places (including a courthouse). *It passed by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **SB 1238** by Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) would update statutes related to **broadband development**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1563** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would repeal Section 96.66(h) of the Education Code which prohibits the **Sam Houston State University College of Osteopathic Medicine** from receiving formula funding. *It passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1831** by Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) would grant exclusive authority of the **Employees Retirement System** over the **purchases of goods and services** related to the operations of its home office facilities unless the purchases are made with General Revenue money. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 2012** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would implement a **performance credit mechanism** to pay generators to be available during times of peak demand, but would provide penalties for generators that do not provide the electricity they commit to. *The committee substitute and three floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*

About SB 23, Lt. Governor Dan Patrick said, “Before this session, I came up with the idea for SB 23 to keep guns out of the hands of criminals. Texans believe in the rule of law and know that criminals who use firearms while committing crimes must be punished to the full extent of the law. SB 23 makes it very clear that if any criminal uses a gun while committing a crime, they will face steep consequences. SB 23 establishes a 10-year mandatory minimum sentence for the use of a firearm in the commission of felony offenses.”

Lt. Governor Dan Patrick commented on the passage of the Senate’s **power grid reform package**. The package includes SB 6, SB 7, SB 2010, SB 2011, SB 2012, SB 2013, and SJR 1. Lt. Governor Dan Patrick said, “Since Winter Storm Uri, I have been abundantly clear that we must bring new dispatchable generation (primarily new natural gas plants) online as soon as possible to make sure that Texans have reliable power under any circumstance. The Senate’s grid reform package levels the playing field between dispatchable and renewable energy sources by elevating dispatchable energy sources to put ratepayers first. This package passed with a strong bipartisan majority because the Texas Senate and I recognize the importance of protecting lives that can be lost during a blackout. We also know improving our grid is essential for the Texas Miracle to continue throughout the 21st century. Texas’ economy is booming and we must have reliable generation to meet ever-increasing demand.”

On Thursday, passed 22 bills. Five of them initially only passed to Third Reading, but the Senate adjourned and started a new legislative day and gave them final approval. The Senate-passed bills included:

- **SB 8** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would establish a **parental bill of rights** and school responsibilities regarding instructional materials; and would establish an **education savings account program**. *The committee substitute and 21 floor amendments were adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 18 to 13. On the next legislative day, it passed by a vote of 18 to 13.*
- **SB 9** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would establish an **educator bill of rights**. *The committee substitute and six floor amendments were adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 21 to 10. On the next legislative day, it passed by a vote of 22 to 9.*
- **SB 52** by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would allow a **patient at a state hospital** to designate an **essential caregiver** for in-person visitation. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 130** by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would prohibit a city or county from adopting an ordinance or **regulation** requiring an employer to provide **employment benefits**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 20 to 11. On the next legislative day, it passed by a vote of 19 to 12.*
- **SB 175** by Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would prohibit public funds being expended for **lobbying by political subdivisions**. *The committee substitute was adopted and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 19 to 12. On the next legislative day, it passed by a vote of 19 to 12.*
- **SB 412** by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would prohibit institutions of higher education from requiring a **pregnant or parenting student** to take a leave of absence or withdraw from the student's degree or certificate program. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 500** by Royce West (D-Dallas) would increase the cap on the **value of a residential dwelling** that can be offered or awarded as a **prize at a charitable raffle** from \$250,000 to \$1,000,000. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 576** by Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) would add to the definition of exploitation for purposes of **exploitation** by providers against **elderly individuals**, providing a monetary or property loan to a provider by an individual receiving services. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 812** by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require food service establishments to display a poster relating to **food allergen awareness** in a regularly-accessible area of the establishment. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 26 to 5.*
- **SB 1008** by Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) would require students to establish **residency in a school district's** residency zone within 90 days (instead of 10 days) after the date of a military order. *It passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*

- **SB 1040** by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would prohibit health benefit plan coverage for a transplant operation performed in China or another country know to have participated in **organ harvesting**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1114** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) would prohibit political subdivisions from adopting a regulation that prohibits or restricts the use or sale of a product otherwise permitted by state and federal law that that reduces **greenhouse gas emissions** or conserving natural resources. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 25 to 6.*
- **SB 1237** by Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) would require the comptroller to ensure that a security officer or **investigator commissioned as a peace officer by the comptroller** is compensated according to the commissioned officer classification salary schedule prescribed by the General Appropriations Act. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1249** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) would establish the **Living Organ Donor Education Program** to educate Texans about the need for living organ donors. *It passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1907** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would increase the criminal penalty for an election judge to knowingly fail to deliver **precinct election records** on time. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 29 to 11. On the next legislative day, it passed by a vote of 19 to 12.*
- **SB 1909** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would require a court that issues a **temporary restraining order** under the **Election Code** to submit a copy of the order to the attorney general. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SB 1950** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would prohibit a county clerk, elections administrator, early voting clerk, or early voting ballot board from suspending the requirements of the **mail ballot review**. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 19 to 12. On the next legislative day, it passed by a vote of 19 to 12.*
- **SB 2440** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would require, instead of allow, municipalities and counties to require a **person who submits a plat for a subdivision tract** of land for which the source of water is groundwater to have attached a statement that is prepared by an engineer or geoscientist certifying that **adequate groundwater** is available for the subdivision. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **SJR 1** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would propose a constitutional amendment establishing the **Texas Energy Insurance Fund** to support construction and operation of electric generating facilities. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 24 to 7.*
- **SJR 59** by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would propose a constitutional amendment allowing the legislature to act on bills and resolutions at any time during a **regular legislative session**. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed by a vote of 28 to 3.*

About SB 8, Lt Governor Dan Patrick said, “From the first day I arrived in the Texas Senate, my goal and my passion has been to improve public education. As Senator, when I served as Chair of the Senate Committee on Education, that passion only grew. I led the fight to increase school funding, reduce the number of STAAR tests from 15 to 5, create scholarships for future math and science teachers, and place added focus on career education, as well as several other initiatives. I have always believed in our public school system of over 8,000 campuses. Many schools are great, most are good, but we also have those that are failing our students. That is why we need school choice for parents who want options other than their failing public school. As Lt. Governor, we passed school choice through the Senate in 2015 and 2017. Sadly, both bills died in the Texas House without a hearing. Parents are the single most important factor to the success of their child in education, followed by a teacher. Republicans, Independents and Democrats all support school choice because Texans agree that families must have choice in education so every child has the best chance of success. SB 8, by Senator Creighton, includes an education savings account of \$8,000 per school year so parents can become greater advocates for their children. SB 8 also provides funding to schools in our smaller districts, with 20,000 students or less, which are a major portion of our 1,200 school districts, for 5 years after a student opts for a private school. SB 8 also prohibits the classroom instruction of sexual orientation and gender identity in curriculum in prekindergarten through 12th grade. In addition, SB 8 empowers parental rights by establishing clear timelines in a public school grievance policy, giving parents the ability to address problems with confidence. SB 8 also allows free transfers between school districts, subject to capacity, giving parents more public school options, and enables parents to request curriculum reviews, ensuring lesson content is age, grade, and developmentally appropriate. Furthermore, SB 8 requires parental consent before any changes are made to a student’s health and wellness activities in school. These changes are designed to expand parental rights in education.”

About SB 9, Lt. Governor Dan Patrick said, “As the husband of a long-time school teacher, the son-in-law of a teacher and father-in-law of a teacher, I know the impact that a great teacher makes on the development of a child. We all remember the teachers who made a significant impact on our lives. Beginning in 2019, under my leadership, we shifted the way we pay teachers in Texas. We are now driving more dollars to teacher salaries and we are rewarding teachers that stay in the classroom. Those teachers can make more than \$70,000 per year. SB 9 builds upon the legislation we passed in 2019. SB 9 also creates a program to incentivize bringing experienced retired teachers back to the classroom. In addition, SB 9 allows teachers to enroll their children in their school’s prekindergarten program, if offered, for free. SB 9 is a biproduct of listening to those in the profession to elevate the teaching profession in Texas. I thank Senator Creighton for his tireless work on this legislation and the Senate for sharing my commitment to supporting Texas teachers, who give so much for the future of our state. SB 9 increases teacher pay by \$2,000 for every Texas

teacher. If a teacher teaches in a district with 20,000 students or less, they will receive an additional \$4,000, to help close the salary gap between urban and suburban teachers and rural teachers.”

Total number of bills reported out of Senate Committees this week: 188
Total number of bills passed by the Senate this week: 115
Total number of bills passed on the Local & Uncontested Calendar: 43
Total number of bills passed by the Senate this session: 194

Next Week:The Senate adjourned until 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 11, 2023.

HOUSE:

The House was in session Monday through Thursday this week.

On Monday, the House gave preliminary approval to seven bills including:

- **HB 49** by Stephanie Klick (R-Fort Worth) would make **hospital investigation information** in possession of the Health & Human Services Commission accessible to the public as long as personally identifiable patient or health care provider information is omitted from the information. *It passed by a vote of 147 to 0.*
- **HB 140** by Mary Gonzalez (D-Clint) would require the Health & Human Services Commission to ensure that quality **co-navigation services** are provided to individuals who are **deaf-blind**. *It passed by a vote of 124 to 21.*
- **HB 617** by Drew Darby (R-San Angelo) would authorize the Texas Tech University Health Science Center to establish a pilot project to provide **emergency telemedicine services in rural areas**. *It passed by a vote of 142 to 2.*
- **HB 1058** by Craig Goldman (R-Fort Worth) would provide a franchise tax credit or an insurance premium tax credit for **low-income housing** developments. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed by a vote of 121 to 25.*
- **HB 1599** by John Bucy (D-Austin) would require the Health & Human Services Commission to implement an **express lane** option for determining a child’s **eligibility** for coverage under the **child health plan** and Medicaid coverage. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 106 to 40.*
- **HB 1964** by Ana Hernandez (D-Houston) would add an employee of a vehicle storage facility that stored a vehicle involved in an accident to the list of entities that are entitled to receive a **motor vehicle accident report**. *It passed by a vote of 141 to 6.*

On Tuesday, the House passed the Third Reading bills and gave preliminary approval to six bills including:

- **HB 4** by Giovanni Capriglione (R-Keller) would be the **Texas Data Privacy and Security Act**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 146 to 0.*
- **HB 456** by Tom Craddick (R-Midland) would institute a property tax exemption of **royalty interests** owned by a charitable organization. *It passed by a vote of 145 to 1.*
- **HB 729** by Toni Rose (D-Dallas) would establish the **Statewide Intellectual and Developmental Disability Coordinating Council** to develop a strategic approach for providing intellectual and developmental disability services. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and passed by a vote of 108 to 38.*
- **HB 796** by Angie Chen Button (R-Garland) would require appraisal districts to maintain a publicly-accessible, searchable **protest hearing internet database** that includes the names of the appraisal review board members, hearing dates and times, appraised value and ARB determinations. *The committee substitute was adopted and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 146 to 0.*
- **HB 1315** by Abel Herrero (D-Robstown) would establish the open burn pit registry fund; and would authorize **specialty license plates** to honor members of the U.S. armed **forces exposed to open burn pits**. *It passed by a vote of 138 to 9.*
- **HB 2468** by Dustin Burrows (R-Lubbock) would revise the qualifications for lifetime income benefits and create a new qualification for **first responders who sustain a serious bodily injury**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 146 to 0.*

On Wednesday, the House passed the Third Reading bills and passed:

- **HB 471** by Jared Patterson (R-Frisco) would create **line of duty pay/leave for first responders**. *The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 146 to 0.*
- **HB 727** by Toni Rose (D-Dallas) would exempt persons with **severe mental illness** from the death penalty. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed by a vote of 97 to 48.*

And, they gave preliminary approval to five bills including:

- **HB 162** by Andrew Murr (R-Junction) would establish minimum standards for **prescribed burns**. *It passed by a vote of 147 to 0.*
- **HB 1161** by Morgan Meyer (R-Dallas) would maintain the confidentiality of home address information for **victims of child abduction**. *It passed by a vote of 148 to 0.*
- **HB 1228** by Will Metcalf (R-Conroe) would require **appraisal data** to be provided to a property owner without a fee. *It passed by a vote of 148 to 0.*
- **HB 1363** by John Kuempel (R-Seguin) would repeal the **Real Estate Inspection Recovery Fund**. *It passed by a vote of 148 to 0.*

On Thursday, the House passed the Third Reading bills. They spent over eight hours debating **HB 1** by Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood), the House version of the **general appropriations** bill. 388 proposed amendments were pre-filed for HB 1. Most of those were moved into Article XI (the wish list). Ultimately, 86 amendments were discussed. *The committee substitute and 71 floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 136 to 10.* The House also took up and passed **SB 30**, the **supplemental appropriations** bill. *The committee substitute and four floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 147 to 1.*

About HB 1, Speaker Dade Phelan said, “HB 1 is a fiscally conservative two-year budget that makes a number of critical investments to meet the needs of this rapidly-growing state. HB 1 stays well below the state’s constitutional pay-as-you-go limit, the constitutional tax spending limit and the new consolidated general revenue limit. From property tax relief to public education, HB 1 prioritizes Texas by dedicating dollars o a wide range of issues while also keeping spending in check. HB 1 goes Beyond maintaining our commitment to Texas children and educators by increasing the state’s share of public education funding to over 50 percent for the first time in more than a decade, fully funding schools, funneling additional dollars toward school safety measures and supporting retired teachers through a cost-of-living adjustment. HB 1 also allocates what would amount to the largest property tax cut in Texas history, which also expanding mental health resources, supporting institutions of higher education, fostering continued border security efforts and earmarking funds for critical infrastructure projects across the state. I am grateful to my colleagues for being wise stewards of taxpayer dollars and doing what we can as lawmakers to build on the many successes our state has experienced over the past two years, especially during a time in which Texas is facing a record-setting surplus. HB 1 is a spending plan that every Texas House member should be proud of, and our chamber looks forward to working with the Texas Senate to get HB 1 to the governor’s desk in the near future.” The speaker provided the following highlights of HB 1 and SB 30:

- \$60.3 billion to fully fund school districts and charter schools, including a \$5 billion increase in public education funding, contingent on other actions of the legislature
- \$17.3 billion for property tax relief, including a 25-cent tax compression for school district property taxes and a \$6.8 billion reduction in recapture payments, when combined with HB 2 and HJR 1
- \$9.6 billion for mental health resources, including the support of inpatient client services at state hospitals, outpatient services through local mental health authorities and substance abuse treatment for incarcerated persons and veterans
- \$5.3 billion for the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services, including an additional \$177.8 million for foster care rates and \$91.1 million to expand community-based care in two new regions of the state
- \$4.6 billion for border security efforts, including \$2.2 billion to the Texas Military Department and \$1 billion to the Office of the Governor

- \$3.5 billion to provide an ongoing cost-of-living adjustment for Texas retired teachers, contingent on other actions of the legislature
- \$3.5 billion toward funding and incentivizing research at institutions of higher education, contingent on other actions of the legislature
- \$1.6 billion for school safety grants, including assisting school districts in replacing or upgrading windows, fencing, communications and other safety measures
- \$1.1 billion for funding enrollment growth, student financial aid and freezing tuition growth over a two-year period at institutions of higher education
- \$629 million for the Flood Infrastructure Fund, rural water projects and other infrastructure-related matters.

Total number of bills reported out of House Committees this week: 104
Total number of bills passed by the House this week: 23
Total number of bills passed by the House this session: 30

Next Week:The House adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Monday, April 10, 2023.

BUDGET:

Senate Finance Committee – On Monday, the Senate Finance Committee took up:

SB 1232 by Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) would continue the statute requiring **budget surplus** amounts to be transferred to the economic stabilization fund and the state highway fund from the current expiration date of December 31, 2034 to December 31, 2042. *It was left pending.*

SB 1854 by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would require the Texas Public School Employees Group Insurance Program to offer an **optional plan** that covers **dental care** and a plan covering **vision care** for retirees, dependents, surviving spouses, and surviving dependent children. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

House Pensions, Investments & Financial Services Committee – On Wednesday, the House Pensions, Investments & Financial Services Committee took up:

HB 187 by Brooks Landgraf (R-Odessa) would require a ballot measure for **approval of the issuance of bonds** or other public debt to be submitted to voters and taxpayers only during a November election, removing the option to vote on debt during lower turnout elections. *It was left pending.*

HB 1489 by Carl Tepper (R-Lubbock) would be the Certificate of Obligation Reform Act of 2023 and would prohibit public entities from issuing **bonds** for any purpose other than for construction, renovation, repair or improvement to a **public work**. *It was left pending.*

HB 3813 by Mano DeAyala (R-Houston) would allow individuals **retiring** from **Windham ISD** to participate in the Texas Employees Group Insurance Program. *It was left pending.*

HB 4082 by Craig Goldman (R-Fort Worth) would authorize cities and counties to issue **tax anticipation notes** to be issued for transportation, utility, first responder, and parks and recreation expenses. *It was left pending.*

House State Affairs Committee – On Wednesday, the House State Affairs Committee took up:

HB 4510 by John Smithee (R-Amarillo) would require **state agencies** to submit their **annual financial reports** by November 1st (instead of November 20th) each year, including institutions of higher education; and would require state agencies that obtain an audited financial report to submit it in place of the annual report. *It was left pending.*

Passed the Senate:

SB 729 by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would allow **military service** to be credited under the **Employees Retirement System of Texas**. *It passed the Senate on the Local & Uncontested Calendar by a vote of 31 to 0.*

SCR 28 by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would urge Congress to repeal the **Government Pension Offset** and the Windfall Elimination Provision of the Social Security Act. *It passed the Senate on the Local & Uncontested Calendar by a vote of 31 to 0.*

Reported from Committee:

HB 540 by Oscar Longoria (D-Mission) would allow the Texas State Library and Archives Commission to provide **library construction grants** to encourage the establishment of new public libraries or the improvement of existing public libraries. *It was reported favorably from the House Culture, Recreation & Tourism Committee.*

HB 1928 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would allow **supplemental pay** for members of **Texas military forces** (not just Texas National Guard) for people who suffer an economic hardship as a result of serving on military duty. *It was reported favorably from the House Defense & Veterans Affairs Committee and recommended for the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 2674 by Stan Kitzman (R-Pattison) would authorize an application for **designation as a state depository** to be sent to the comptroller electronically. *It was reported favorably from the House Ways & Means Committee.*

HB 2691 by Angie Chen Button (R-Richardson) would require **state agencies** to notify a person who has **indebtedness or a delinquency** to the state agency that the matter has been reported to the comptroller; and would authorize the comptroller to deduct the amount of the indebtedness or delinquency from any payments the comptroller makes to that person. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the House Ways & Means Committee.*

Next Week:

Wednesday, April 12, 2023 – Senate Finance Committee will meet at 9:00 a.m. in E1.036 of the capitol extension to take up:

SJR 56 by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would propose a constitutional amendment increasing the **cap** on the **economic stabilization fund** from 10 percent to 15 percent of general revenue in the preceding biennium.

ELECTIONS:

House Elections Committee – On Tuesday, the House Elections Committee took up:

HB 246 by Valoree Swanson (R-Spring) would require the secretary of state to establish a pilot program requiring a county to use a **video recording** device to record **ballot counting activity** in at least 20 percent of precincts in the county. *It was left pending.*

HB 1980 by Mark Dorazio (R-San Antonio) would require the procedures adopted by the Texas Department of Transportation for the issuance of a **personal identification certificate** to a person who surrenders the person's driver's license to require that the person issued a personal identification certificate be provided a voter registration form to update the person's voter registration information to include the identification number of the newly-issued certificate. *It was left pending.*

HB 3159 by Jeff Leach (R-Allen) would allow a voter with a disability to cast a ballot using an **accessible absentee mail system**. *It was left pending.*

HB 3372 by Kronda Thimesch (R-Lewisville) would require a **political candidate** or officeholder who accepts a political **contribution made using a credit card** to report the full amount as a political contribution including any amount deducted from the contribution by the credit card issuer as a processing fee. *It was left pending.*

HB 3565 by Reggie Smith (R-Sherman) would require Texas Senate and House and State Board of Education candidates that receive **political contributions** from one person that in the aggregate exceed \$10,000 (the reporting threshold would be \$25,000 for statewide candidates) to file political contribution reports about the contribution with the Ethics Commission within 24 hours. *It was left pending.*

Passed the Senate:

SB 1052 by Drew Springer (R-Muenster) would allow **election judges** to be compensated for two (instead of one) hour of work before the polls open. *It passed the Senate on the Local & Uncontested Calendar by a vote of 31 to 0.*

Reported from Committee:

HB 636 by Jared Patterson (R-Frisco) would authorize **election judges** who are licensed to carry a handgun to carry a **handgun at a polling place**. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the House Select Committee on Youth Health & Safety.*

SB 220 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would require the secretary of state to appoint a **state election marshal**, who would appoint election marshals for Department of Public Safety regions to enforce election laws. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee.*

SB 260 by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would require voter registrars to deliver a voter a written confirmation notice requesting **confirmation of the voter's current address** if the voter's residence address is a commercial post office box or similar location that does not correspond to a residence. *It was reported favorably from the Senate State Affairs Committee.*

SB 477 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require (instead of allow) an **election officer** to accept a **person with a mobility problem** to vote before accepting others to vote at the polling place. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

SB 823 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would authorize the **secretary of state** to **suspend the employment of a county elections administrator** if the secretary has received an administrative election complaint and has good cause to believe that a recurring pattern of problems in the county served by the administrator. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee.*

SB 924 by Drew Springer (R-Muenster) would allow counties with a population between 150,000 and 1.2 million to **consolidate precincts** (of up to 10,000 active voters) if the polling place will adequately serve the voters of the consolidated precinct. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee.*

SB 1039 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would establish a procedure for the county clerk to investigate **complaints of voting irregularities** with appeals going to the secretary of state. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on April 11, 2023 (first placement).*

SB 1054 by Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) would require a trial in the **contest of an election on a proposed constitutional amendment** to be between 45 and 180 days after the date of the contested election, although it could be earlier than 45 days at the request of the contestant. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee. It was on the Senate Intent Calendar on April 6, 2023 (first placement).*

SB 1599 by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would require election officers to maintain a **register of ballots to be voted by mail** returned at a polling place including the name of each voter who returns a mail ballot and the ballot's number; and would establish a procedure for **correcting a defect in a mail ballot** and for tracking mail ballots. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee.*

SB 1600 by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would require the Secretary of State to prescribe rules that require a person to submit **proof of citizenship** to a voter registrar to determine **voter eligibility**. *It was reported favorably from the Senate State Affairs Committee.*

SB 1661 by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would prohibit a central counting station from purchasing or using a **ballot scanner** unless the scanner is only capable of using a storage device that can only be used once. *It was reported favorably as*

substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.

SB 1705 by Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would require **third-party candidates** for office to participate in a primary election to decide their party's nominees. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee.*

SB 1750 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would require counties with a population over 1 million (Bexar, Collin, Dallas, Harris, Tarrant, and Travis Counties) to have their **elections administered** by the **county clerk**. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee.*

SB 1807 by Drew Springer (R-Muenster) would establish civil penalties for **election** or elected **officials** who fail to **conduct** their **elections** according to the Texas Election Code after being advised by the Secretary of State on how to correct the violation. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee.*

SB 1846 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would prohibit a manufacturer of **voting systems** from entering into a contract for software development services with an entity or individual located in China, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, or Russia. *It was reported favorably from the Senate State Affairs Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

SB 1911 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would increase the penalty for the intentional **failure to deliver election supplies timely**, intentionally obstructing the distribution of election supplies, and unlawfully revealing how a candidate or measure is doing or if a voter has or has not voted in an election. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee.*

SB 1993 by Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would require the Secretary of State to call a **new election** in a county if two percent or more polling locations in a county of 1 million or more (Bexar, Collin, Dallas, Harris, Tarrant, and Travis Counties) are denied paper ballots for more than one hour. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee.*

SB 1938 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would extend the ability of the Secretary of State to withhold funds to a voter registrar that fails to timely perform a duty regarding the approval, change, or **cancellation of a voter registration**. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee.*

SB 2451 by Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) would require the Secretary of State to prescribe instructions to be printed on **mail ballot materials** for marking the ballot envelope correctly. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate State Affairs Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

Next Week:

Thursday, April 13, 2023 – House Elections Committee will meet at 10:30 a.m. in E2.016 to take up:

HB 824 by Brad Buckley (R-Killeen) would authorize **political subdivisions** to move the **date of their elections** to the November uniform election date through December 31, 2024 (the previous deadline was December 31, 2016).

HB 1208 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would allow **children under that age of 14** to accompany the child's parent to a voting station and to **read or mark a ballot** at the direction of the parent.

HB 1243 by Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) would change the penalty for **illegal voting** from a Class A misdemeanor to a state jail felony.

HB 1356 by Penny Morales Shaw (D-Houston) would add to the list of acceptable forms of **voter identification** a Transportation Worker identification credential issued by the Transportation Security Administration.

HB 2626 by Carl Tepper (R-Lubbock) would require the governing body of a **political subdivision** to make **campaign finance reports** filed with the political subdivision available to the public within five business days after the report is filed.

HIGHER EDUCATION:

House Higher Education Committee – On Monday, the House Higher Education Committee took up:

HB 400 by Stephanie Klick (R-Fort Worth) would establish the **Psychiatric Specialty Innovation Grant Program** to provide incentive payments to medical schools that administer innovative adult psychiatric training programs; and establish the **Behavioral Health Innovation Grant Program** to incentivize institutions of higher education to administer innovative recruitment, training, and retention programs to increase the number of mental health professionals. *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 875 by Brian Harrison (R-Waxahachie) would allow **Texas State Technical College** to operate a campus in one or more locations in **Ellis County** (instead of the City of Red Oak). *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 1142 by Shawn Thierry (D-Houston) would add **students who are homeless** to the duties of the liaison officer to assist students who are or were in foster care. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

HB 1323 by James Talarico (D-Austin) would require the **outreach program for foster students** to receive free higher education tuition and fees to be provided to all residential child-care facilities, foster parents and caregivers and school districts, charters and private schools offering grades 9-12. *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 1474 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would prohibit institutions of higher education from requiring a **pregnant or parenting student** to take a leave of absence or withdraw from the student's degree or certificate program; limit the student's studies; participate in an alternative program; change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the institution. *It was left pending.*

HB 2100 by Four Price (R-Amarillo) would make **mental health professionals** eligible for student loan repayment assistance. *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 2639 by Travis Clardy (R-Nacogdoches) would abolish Stephen F. Austin State University and require the **University of Texas System** to establish a **new university in Nacogdoches**. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

HB 2672 by Frederick Frazier (R-McKinney) would expand eligibility for student loan repayment assistance under the **math and science scholars loan repayment program** to include persons who agree to teach mathematics or science for a specified period in any public school (not just schools that receive federal funding under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965). *It was left pending.*

HB 3211 by Lynn Stucky (R-Sanger) would add a campus of the **Texas State Technical College System** in Denton County. *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 3287 by Charles “Doc” Anderson (R-Waco) would change location requirements for campuses of **Texas State Technical College System** from cities to counties (Harlingen becomes Cameron County; Sweetwater becomes Nolan County; Abilene becomes Taylor County; Brownwood becomes Brown County; Breckenridge becomes Stephens County; Marshall becomes Harrison County; Waco becomes McLennan County; and Red Oak becomes Ellis County). *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 4005 by John Raney (R-Bryan) would establish the **Texas Competency-Based Education Grant Program** to provide financial assistance to enable eligible students to enroll in competency-based baccalaureate degree programs. *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 4997 by John Kuempel (R-Seguin) would add a campus or campuses in Comal and Guadalupe Counties to the **Texas State Technical College System**. *It was voted out favorably.*

Senate State Affairs Committee – On Monday, the Senate State Affairs Committee took up:

SB 1711 by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would create a cause of action by a person or student organization against an institution of **higher education** alleging a **violation of expressive rights**. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

Senate Finance Committee – On Monday, the Senate Finance Committee took up:

SB 19 and SJR 5 by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would propose a constitutional amendment renaming the National Research University Fund as the **Texas University Fund** to fund public institutions of higher education to achieve national prominence as major research universities. *They were voted out favorably as substituted. They are on the Senate Intent Calendar for April 11, 2023.*

Senate Subcommittee on Higher Education – On Thursday, the Senate Subcommittee on Higher Education took up:

SB 17 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would **prohibit** institutions of higher education from requiring or giving **preferential consideration** for certain **ideological oaths or statements** that undermine academic freedom and open inquiry and impede the discovery, preservation, and transmission of knowledge,

including students, applicants for admission, employees, or contractors. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

SB 55 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to conduct a study to determine best practices for **assisting students with autism spectrum disorder** who are enrolled at institutions of higher education. *It was left pending.*

SB 695 by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would allow the **University of Texas at Tyler's School of Pharmacy** to receive state funding. *It was left pending.*

SB 804 by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would make **mental health professionals** eligible for student loan repayment assistance. *It was left pending.*

SB 1758 by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would allow the **University of Texas System** to use **land donated** to the system by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department in Bastrop County for any purpose consistent with the mission of the system. *It was left pending.*

SB 2123 by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would allow the University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler to participate in the **Joint Admission Medical Program**. *It was left pending.*

SB 2137 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would require institutions of higher education to offer an undergraduate elective **course in personal financial literacy and soft skills** as a social and behavioral sciences course. *It was left pending.*

SB 2139 by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would establish the **Opportunity High School Diploma pilot program** in up to five public junior colleges to offer an alternative competency-based high school diploma program for adult learners. *It was left pending.*

Reported from Committee:

HB 1192 by Chris Turner (D-Arlington) would require students to complete one year of ROTC training for each year that a student is enrolled in a degree or certificate program (up to four years) to qualify for the **Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program**. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the House Higher Education Committee.*

HB 1636 by Terry Canales (D-Edinburg) would allow **South Texas College** to offer up to six (instead of five) **baccalaureate degree** programs. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the House Higher Education Committee.*

SB 18 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would **prohibit** institutions of higher education from **granting tenure** or any type of permanent employment after September 1, 2023. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee.*

SB 336 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would expand the **compliance programs** at public institutions of higher education to include agents, contractors, subcontractors, or other persona acting on behalf of an institution of higher education. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

SB 462 by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would establish the **Texas Competency-Based Education Grant Program** to provide financial assistance

to enable eligible students to enroll in competency-based baccalaureate degree programs. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee.*

SB 646 by Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) would authorize formula funding for distance education provided by **Lamar State College–Orange** students who reside in another state that is contiguous to the county in which the college is located. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

SB 867 by Royce West (D-Dallas) would allow **opioid antagonists** to be provided to **institutions of higher education**. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Health & Human Services Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

SB 1429 by Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) would prohibit a standardized examination prepared by a private entity from being a graduation requirement for a **nursing education program**. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Health & Human Services Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

SB 1583 by Bob Hall (R-Edgewood) would prohibit institutions of higher education from conducting **gain of function research** on potentially pandemic pathogens in the state. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate Health & Human Services Committee. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on April 11, 2023.*

SJR 81 by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would propose a constitutional amendment establishing the **Technical Institution Infrastructure Fund** to provide funding for capital projects and equipment purchases related to career and technical education programs offered by the **Texas State Technical College System**. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee.*

Next Week:

Monday, April 10, 2023 – House Higher Education Committee will meet at 10:00 a.m. in E2.010 of the capitol extension to take up:

HB 906 by Joe Moody (D-El Paso) would require institutions of higher education to provide all entering students (not just full-time students) information about **available mental health and suicide prevention services** offered by the institution and early warning signs and appropriate intervention for a person who may be considering suicide.

HB 1960 by Eddie Morales (D-Eagle Pass) would change the name of Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College to **Sul Ros State University Middle Rio Grande Region** and would allow it to offer all higher educational courses (instead of upper-level courses).

HB 2158 by Trent Ashby (R-Lufkin) would provide a tuition and fee exemption for **fire fighters with a volunteer fire department** that responds to 9-1-1 emergencies in a designated area and attends at least 20 hours of annual training.

HB 2504 by Angie Chen Button (R-Richardson) would allow scholarship money by the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy to fund **scholarships for accounting students** (not just fifth-year accounting students).

HB 2871 by Mary Gonzalez (D-Clint) would require the University of Texas at Austin to design and implement a program connecting local education agencies and institutions of higher education with evidence-based and accredited **computer science professional development resources**.

HB 2920 by Dennis Paul (R-Webster) would require the information maintained by the Texas Education Agency regarding **postsecondary education and career opportunities** to include information to assist prospective postsecondary students in assessing the value of a certificate program, associate or baccalaureate degree program or other credential program.

HB 3124 by Suleman Lalani (D-Sugar Land) would require institutions of higher education to **prohibit the use of** cigarettes, e-cigarettes, or smokable **tobacco products** on the grounds of the institution's campus.

HB 3486 by Chris Turner (D-Grand Prairie) would allow **early college high school programs** to provide for an academic associate degree; would require **reports of nontransferable credit** to be submitted to the coordinating board by May 1st (instead of March 1st) each year and include whether the institution complied with the dispute resolution process; and would require institutions that adopt a field of study curriculum to post the set of courses with the associated course numbers under the **common course numbering system**.

HB 3993 by Dennis Paul (R-Webster) would add students completing a nontraditional secondary education to the **Top 10 percent automatic admissions** statute.

HB 4363 by John Kuempel (R-Seguin) would establish the **Future Texas Teachers Scholarship Program** to recruit, prepare, and retain a talented and diverse workforce of career teachers by providing assistance for tuition, mandatory fees, and other usual and customary costs of attendance.

HB 4571 by John Bucy (D-Austin) would require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to establish a **hunger-free campus program** to support institutions of higher education in establishing essential and sustainable solutions to hunger on campuses.

HJR 201 by Terry Wilson (R-Georgetown) would propose a constitutional amendment establishing the **Technical Institution Infrastructure Fund** to provide funding for capital projects and equipment purchases related to career and technical education programs offered by the **Texas State Technical College System**.

PUBLIC EDUCATION:

House Select Committee on Youth Health & Safety – On Monday, the House Select Committee on Youth Health & Safety took up:

HB 185 by Mary Gonzalez (D-Clint) would include **chronically absent students** (students absent more than 10 percent of school days) as students at risk of dropping out of school; and would require the total number of chronically absent students disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and status as special education

students, students identified as having dyslexia, educationally disadvantaged students, and emergent bilingual students to be reported to the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). *It was left pending.*

HB 773 by Alma Allen (D-Houston) would prohibit a school district or charter from **releasing a student to the student's parent** before the end of the instructional day and after the parent receives a school-initiated communication if release of the student is a disciplinary management technique or a reaction to the student's behavior that impedes the student's ability to learn but does not violate the student code of conduct or require disciplinary action – unless the student is suspended or expelled. *It was left pending.*

HB 1927 by Lacey Hull (R-Houston) would require a peace officer who takes a minor into custody to use age-appropriate trauma-informed practices in responding to the situation; and would authorize a parent of a **child** who is being placed under an **emergency detention** to take custody of the child and to voluntarily seek treatment or services for the child from a provider of the person's choice. *It was left pending.*

HB 2090 by Ray Lopez (D-San Antonio) would allow school districts and charters to offer students in grade 12 an **elective course on community safety**, firearm safety, and mental health. *It was left pending.*

HB 2111 by Steve Allison (R-San Antonio) would authorize school districts to employ current or former licensed **federal law enforcement agents** who are authorized to carry a weapon while on duty as the school district's security personnel. *It was left pending.*

HB 2126 by Vikki Goodwin (D-Austin) would require school district that permit **corporal punishment** as a method of student discipline to provide and e-mail notice to parents that includes a statement of the person's right to prohibit the use of corporal punishment against the student. *It was left pending.*

HB 2361 by Four Price (R-Amarillo) would allow local mental health authorities that are unable to fill an open position for a non-physician **mental health professional for schools** due to a shortage of qualified applicants to receive a waiver from the executive Commissioner of Health & Human Services to employ a licensed master social worker or a licensed professional counselor. *It was left pending.*

HB 2812 by DeWayne Burns (R-Cleburne) would allow **school safety training** to be provided by a private religious academy or school that is accredited by an organization approved by the Texas Education Agency for private school accreditation. *It was left pending.*

HB 2976 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would allow school districts to offer an **elective course in firearms safety** to high school students. *It was left pending.*

HB 3255 by Christian Manuel (D-Port Arthur) would require principals, assistant principals, school marshals, school district peace officers, school resource officers, and school security personnel to complete **emergency response management training**. *It was left pending.*

HB 3642 by James Talarico (D-Austin) would allow the **school safety allotment** to be used for providing professional development opportunities for educators regarding classroom behavioral management. *It was left pending.*

HB 3648 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would add a school district's director of special education services to the board of the **Texas School Safety Center**. *It was left pending.*

HB 4824 by Abel Herrero (D-Robstown) would allow school districts to employ **commissioned security officers** as school district security personnel. *It was left pending.*

Senate State Affairs Committee – On Monday, the Senate State Affairs Committee took up:

SB 1556 Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would codify the **right** of a **school district** or charter employee to engage in **religious speech or prayer** while on duty may not be infringed on by the district or charter unless the infringement is necessary to further a compelling state interest and narrowly tailored using the least restrictive means to achieve that compelling state interest. *It was voted out favorably.*

House Public Education Committee – On Tuesday, the House Public Education Committee took up:

HB 11 by Harold Dutton (D-Houston) would make several changes to the **school finance** system. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

HB 100 by Ken King (D-Canadian) would make several changes to the **school finance** system. *It was left pending.*

HB 114 by Ed Thompson (R-Pearland) would make it a Class B misdemeanor to possess five or more **e-cigarettes on school property**; and would allow school administrators and school resource or police officers to confiscate and dispose of e-cigarettes and report the student to local law enforcement *It was left pending.*

HB 2164 by Bobby Guerra (D-McAllen) would require Texas Education Agency to adopt rules providing for robust monitoring of **bilingual education** and **special language programs**. *It was left pending.*

HB 2168 by Bobby Guerra (D-McAllen) would require Texas Education Agency to develop a program of study for use in **career and technology education programs** that prepares and assists students in pursuing a **career teaching bilingual education**, English as a second language, or Spanish. *It was left pending.*

HB 2411 by James Talarico (D-Austin) would require the Commissioner of State Health Services to establish an advisory committee to examine and review the **administration of opioid antagonists** to a person experiencing an apparent opioid-related drug overdose. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

HB 2546 by Will Metcalf (R-Conroe) would remove authority for **districts of innovation** to make modifications to the school day or year. *It was left pending.*

HB 2891 by James Talarico (D-Austin) would allow school districts to maintain a supply of **undesignated glucagon medications** that treat low blood sugar and allow the school nurse to administer it. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

Senate Education Committee – On Wednesday, the Senate Education Committee took up:

SB 11 by Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) would make several changes related to **school safety**. *It was left pending.*

SB 763 by Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would authorize school districts to employ a **chaplain instead of a school counselor** to perform duties required of a school counselor. *It was left pending.*

SB 999 by Royce West (D-Dallas) would prohibit a person from providing **active shooter training** to students or school employees unless the person is certified by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement to provide active shooter training. *It was left pending.*

SB 1475 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would terminate a **school marshal** if the marshal is required to hold an occupational license and the license is suspended or revoked. *It was left pending.*

SB 1515 by Phil King (R-Weatherford) would require schools to **display the Ten Commandments** in each classroom. *It was left pending.*

SB 1630 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would require school districts and charters to adopt and implement an **attendance policy** to inform students and parents regarding the importance of regular attendance and provide appropriate supports to students who fail to regularly attend. *It was left pending.*

SB 1647 by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would allow **dropout recovery education programs** to be operated by an accredited education management organization and be offered in person, remotely, or through a hybrid option. *It was left pending.*

SB 1720 by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would require **confidentiality** of the identity of a public school employee who **reports a potential threat** to a school's threat assessment and safe and supportive school team. *It was left pending.*

SB 1721 by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would require public schools and institutions of higher education to display **historically significant documents to the founding fathers** of the United States including the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Ten Commandments. *It was left pending.*

SB 2088 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would reduce a school district's payment for **attendance** credits by ten percent if the total amount is paid by February 15 of the school year for which the agreement is in effect. *It was left pending.*

SB 2158 by Phil King (R-Weatherford) would require the **firefighters** who receive a **tuition and fee exemption** to be a member in good standing of a volunteer fire department registered with the Texas A&M Forest Service and responds to 9-1-1 emergency calls in a designated area and attend at least 20 hours of annual training. *It was left pending.*

SB 2368 by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would require schools to provide a minimum of 175 **instructional days**. *It was left pending.*

SB 2372 by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would require local health advisory councils to make recommendations regarding the curriculum on the **dangers of opioids** and addiction. *It was left pending.*

SB 2407 by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) would terminate a **school marshal's** status as a school marshal if the person's **license to carry a handgun is revoked**. *It was left pending.*

Reported from Committee:

HB 166 by Mary Gonzalez (D-Clint) would allow educational representatives to be appointed for **students with disabilities**. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

HB 567 by Rhetta Bowers (D-Rowlett) would prohibit a public school or institution of higher education from **discriminating** against a student in dress or grooming policy **based on hair texture** or protective hairstyle commonly or historically associated with race. *It was reported favorably from the House State Affairs Committee.*

HB 900 by Jared Patterson (R-Frisco) would require **book vendors to rate** and identify books that contain **sexually relevant or explicit material** before selling copies to public schools and submit a yearly report of books to the Texas Education Agency that were sold to districts with such ratings for the agency to make available online. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

HB 964 by Jacey Jetton (R-Sugar Land) would add **improper relationship between an educator and student** to the list of reportable convictions or adjudications that must be reported as part of sex offender registration requirements under the Code of Criminal Procedure. *It was reported favorably from the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee.*

HB 1212 by Jacey Jetton (R-Sugar Land) would prohibit school districts from requiring documentation from a clergy member or other religious leader for purposes of excusing a student from attending school to observe a **religious holy day**. *It was reported favorably from the House Public Education Committee.*

HB 1626 by Alma Allen (D-Houston) would prohibit a school district from refusing to admit a student based on the **student's criminal, juvenile, or disciplinary history**. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the House Select Committee on Youth Health & Safety.*

HB 1662 by DeWayne Burns (R-Cleburne) would require **school districts** to post on the district's website the **employment policy** adopted by the district's board of trustees including compensation plans, employee leave conditions and procedures, and professional development requirements. *It was reported favorably from the House Public Education Committee.*

HB 1825 by Chris Turner (D-Grand Prairie) would allow consumption, possession and **sale of alcoholic beverages** at **performing arts facilities** owned by **school districts** in a county in which two or more stadiums with a capacity of at least 40,000 people are located. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the House Licensing & Administrative Procedures Committee. It is on the House Calendar on April 11, 2023.*

HB 2484 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would ban spectators, including parents of a student participant, from attending future **University Interscholastic League competitions** if the spectator engages in conduct that intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causes bodily injury to a person serving as a referee or official. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

HB 2729 by Cody Harris (R-Palestine) would provide different qualifications for a **prekindergarten program supervisor** (must be a certified teacher) than for a prekindergarten teacher (have child development certification or child care or prekindergarten classroom experience). *It was reported favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

HB 2929 by J.M. Lozano (R-Kingsville) would remove special education and bilingual education from the list of **continuing education** items for classroom teachers that no more than 25 percent training can include. It was reported favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.

SB 68 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require school districts to excuse a student from attending school for a **career investigation day** for up to two days during the student's junior and senior years of high school to determine the student's interest in pursuing a career in the professional's field. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

SB 163 by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would remove the expiration date on provisions in the Education Code requiring **parental approval for human sexuality instruction**. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

SB 164 by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would require public **schools to display the founding documents** of the United States including the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and Essays 10 and 57 of the Federalist Papers. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

SB 294 by Nathan Johnson (D-Dallas) would require the commissioner of state health services to establish an advisory committee to examine and review the administration by school districts, charters, and institutions of higher education of **medication for respiratory distress**. Based on recommendations from the advisory committee, it would allow trained personnel to administer medication to a student experiencing respiratory distress. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate Education Committee. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar for April 11, 2023.*

SB 838 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would require school districts and charters to provide a **panic alert device** that allows for immediate contact with district or school emergency services or emergency services agencies, law enforcement agencies, health departments and fire departments in each classroom. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate Education Committee. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar for April 11, 2023.*

SB 1068 by Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would remove restrictions on funding for full-time **on-line educational programs**. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee.*

Next Week:

Monday, April 10, 2023 – House Select Committee on Youth Health & Safety will meet at 2:30 p.m. in E2.026 of the capitol extension to take up:

HB 2673 by Lacey Hull (R-Houston) would require Texas Education Agency to adopt **standards for permissible electronic devices** and software applications used by a school district or charter.

HB 2725 by Gary VanDeaver (R-New Boston) would allow school districts to refer a student to truancy court without imposing **truancy prevention measures** if the district previously imposed prevention measures on the student in a previous school year.

HB 3570 by Nate Schatzline (R-Fort Worth) would create a **cause of action** against a commercial entity that knowingly or intentionally publishes or distributes material on an Internet website, including a **social media platform**, more than one-third of which is **sexual material harmful to minors**, and that fails to verify that the user is 18 or older.

HB 3654 by Yvonne Davis (D-Dallas) would require **automatic suspension** of a student who engages in conduct on or off school property against a school employee or volunteer that is **deliberately violent or threatens** their health or safety.

HB 3800 by Ken King (R-Canadian) would prohibit a managed care health plan from denying participation of a **campus-based mental health professional** as a participating provider in the health plan.

HB 3833 by Janie Lopez (R-San Benito) would add to **school counselor responsibilities** serving students who are at risk of engaging in harmful or inappropriate behaviors in response to personal or academic problems.

HB 3867 by John Bucy (D-Austin) would require the **behavior management plan** for a special education student to provide written notification to the parent that includes whether a mental and physical health screening was conducted and the results of the screening.

HB 3898 by Armando “Mando” Martinez (D-Weslaco) would require the Commissioner of Education to establish a **life skills counselor pilot program** as a strategy for addressing emotional and mental health concerns of students.

HB 3917 by Brad Buckley (R-Salado) would require a county, justice, or municipal court to dismiss a charge against a **parent alleged to have contributed to truancy of a student** if the parent completes the terms of an agreement with the school district and the child attends school.

HB 3931 by Harold Dutton (D-Houston) would define **chronically absent student** as a student who is absent from school for 10 percent of the school’s required instructional time; and would make truancy a Class C misdemeanor.

HB 4777 by Mihaela Plesa (D-Dallas) would require the training for school district peace and resource officers to include the effects of **mental health conditions**, including grief and trauma, on student behavior.

Tuesday, April 11, 2023 – House Public Education Committee will meet at 8:00 a.m. in E2.036 of the capitol extension to take up:

HB 619 by Matt Shaheen (R-Plano) would provide premium tax credits for contributions to educational assistance organizations to award scholarships and assistance through the **Scholarship and Educational Expense Assistance Program**.

HB 3781 by Jacey Jetton (R-Fort Bend) would make several changes to administration of **special education**.

HB 4340 by James Frank (R-Wichita Falls) would require the comptroller to establish the **Education Savings Account Program** to provide 90 percent of the state average maintenance and operations revenue to a parent of a student whose household income is at or below 200 percent of the income guidelines to qualify for free or reduced-price lunch program or a student with a disability to pay for the student to attend a private school.

HB 4807 by Brian Harrison (R-Midlothian) would establish the **Texas Parental Empowerment Program**; would provide premium tax credits for contributions to educational assistance organizations to award scholarships and assistance for qualifying educational expenses to eligible students who demonstrate the greatest financial and academic need and enroll in a nonpublic school.

HB 4969 by Matt Schaefer (R-Tyler) would require the Texas Education Agency to establish a **parent-directed grant program** for public school students through which a parent may purchase supplemental services and supplemental instructional materials for the parent's student.

HJR 182 by Cody Harris (R-Palestine) would propose a constitutional amendment prohibiting state regulation of **private educational settings**.

STATEWIDE:

Senate State Affairs Committee – On Monday, the Senate State Affairs Committee took up:

SJR 70 by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would propose a constitutional amendment making it a **fundamental right for a parent** to direct the upbringing of his/her child including the right to direct the care, custody, control, education, moral and religious training, and medical care of the child; and would prohibit the state or a political subdivision from interfering with the rights of a parent unless the interference is essential to further a compelling governmental interest, and narrowly tailored to accomplish that compelling governmental interest. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

Senate Local Government Committee – On Monday, the Senate Local Government Committee took up:

SB 275 by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would authorize counties to allow the **sale of fireworks** during the five days preceding the Hindu religious **holiday of Diwali**. *It was left pending.*

SB 1730 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would authorize district clerks to sell and distribute **money orders** for **passport application** payments. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

Senate Criminal Justice Committee – On Tuesday, the Senate Criminal Justice Committee took up:

SB 1445 by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) is the sunset bill for **Texas Commission on Law Enforcement**. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

SB 1562 by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) would make it an offense for a person to engage in **child grooming** - to knowingly persuade, induce, entice, or coerce a child younger than 18 to engage in conduct that would make the child a party in a criminal act. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on April 11, 2023 (first placement).*

House State Affairs Committee – On Wednesday, the House State Affairs Committee took up:

HB 1828 by Chris Turner (D-Grand Prairie) would require the Ethics Commission to make the **personal financial statements of candidates** available on the commission's Internet website within 15 days after the statement is filed. *It was left pending.*

HB 4053 by Julie Johnson (D-Farmers Branch) would require a candidate's **personal financial statement** that includes real property to list the name of a person with an interest in the property that holds a mortgage on the property. *It was left pending.*

Passed the Senate:

SB 281 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would authorize designation of more than one **state musicians** including a musician for the classical genre and a musician for the nonclassical genre. *It passed the Senate on the Local & Uncontested Calendar by a vote of 31 to 0.*

SCR 22 by Bob Hall (R-Edgewood) would authorize the Lt. governor and speaker to create **joint committees**. *It passed the Senate on the Local & Uncontested Calendar by a vote of 31 to 0.*

Reported from Committee:

HB 568 by Rhett Andrews Bowers (D-Rowlett) would require **peace officer** training to include instruction on **interacting with persons with Alzheimer's** disease and other dementias. *It was reported favorably from the House Public Safety Committee and recommended for the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 1422 by Will Metcalf (R-Conroe) would require the state observe **daylight saving time** year-round. *It was reported favorably from the House State Affairs Committee. It is on the House Calendar on April 11, 2023.*

HB 1516 by Terry Wilson (R-Georgetown) would authorize **Texas military forces** to use **unmanned aircraft**. *It was reported favorably from the House Defense & Veterans Affairs Committee.*

HB 1550 by Craig Goldman (R-Fort Worth) is the sunset bill for the **Office of State-Federal Relations**. *It was reported favorably from the House International Relations & Economic Development Committee.*

HB 1580 by Will Metcalf (R-Conroe) would provide **parental leave** for state employees. *It was reported favorably from the House State Affairs Committee.*

HCR 36 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would urge Congress to ensure that the **survivors** and surviving families of the **Sutherland Springs mass shooting** receive compensation equivalent to the relief provided to those impacted by similar incidents. *It was reported favorably from the House Select Committee on Youth Health & Safety and recommended for the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 553 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would allow the Texas Facilities Commission to use up to \$20,000 for a ceremony to **dedicate a new state building**. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate Business & Commerce Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

SB 600 by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would institute minimum penalties for the **smuggling of persons**. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate Border Security Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

SB 667 by Royce West (D-Dallas) would establish the state historical marker program to **honor African Americans** who served in the **Texas Legislature** during Reconstruction. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate Natural Resources & Economic Development Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on April 11, 2023.*

SB 1403 by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would require the governor to develop and execute an **interstate compact for border security** among interested states. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate Border Security Committee.*

SB 1427 by Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) would increase criminal penalties for criminal conduct and organizations that threaten the **security of the state**, its residents, and **borders**. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate Border Security Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on April 11, 2023.*

SB 1484 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would require Texas Department of Public Safety to establish a **border operations training program** for peace officers employed by local law enforcement agencies. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Border Security Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

SB 1709 by Phil King (R-Weatherford) would add transnational criminal organizations to **organized criminal activity** statutes; and would enhance the punishment for using or exhibiting a deadly weapon during organized criminal activity. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Border Security Committee. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on April 11, 2023.*

SB 1900 by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would prohibit a **foreign terrorist organization** from purchasing or acquiring title to real property in Texas. *It was*

reported favorably as substituted from the Senate Border Security Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on April 11, 2023 (first placement).

SB 2424 by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would create a new **state crime for illegally entering** the State of Texas from a foreign nation; and would authorize state law enforcement to arrest and prosecute individuals who illegal cross the border anywhere in the state. *It was voted favorably from the Senate Border Security Committee. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on April 11, 2023.*

Next Week:

HB 3012 by J.M. Lozano (R-Kingsville) would add to statutes prohibiting the **trafficking of persons** directing two or more individuals to enter or remain in a park, open space, natural, area, or cultural resource site.

Wednesday, April 12, 2023 – House State Affairs Committee will meet at 10:30 p.m. in Room 140 of the John H. Reagan State Office Building to take up: **HB 7** by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would allow the commissioners court of a county located in a border region to establish a **border protection court program**.

HB 20 by Matt Schaefer (R-Tyler) would establish the **Border Protection Unit** to defend the southern border.

HB 65 by David Spiller (R-Jacksboro) would increase the punishment for **illegal immigration** to a third-degree felony.

HB 82 by David Spiller (R-Jacksboro) would allow the governor to seek Congressional approval of the **Interstate Compact for Border Security**.

HB 800 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would increase the penalties for **human smuggling** and operating a **stash house**.

HB 1585

HB 1600 by Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) would make it a criminal offense for **illegal entry into Texas from Mexico** by persons who are not citizens or legal permanent residents of the United States.

HB 3012 by J.M. Lozano (R-Kingsville) would add to statutes prohibiting the **trafficking of persons** directing two or more individuals to enter or remain in a park, open space, natural, area, or cultural resource site.

TAX:

March Sales Tax Revenue – On April 3rd, Comptroller Glenn Hegar said state sales tax revenue totaled \$3.57 billion in March, 5.9 percent more than in March 2022. The majority of March sales tax revenue is based on sales made in February and remitted to the agency in March. That compares to:

- February 2023 collections were \$3.68 billion, 14.2 percent more than February, 2022
- January 2023 collections were \$4.11 billion, 6.6 percent more than January, 2022;
- December 2022 collections were 3.93 billion, 10.5 percent more than December 2021;

- November 2022 collections were \$3.96 billion, 11.2 percent more than November 2021;
- October 2022 collections were \$3.82 billion, 11.9 percent more than October 2021;
- September 2022 collections were \$3.69 billion, 17.2 percent more than September 2021;
- August 2022 collections were \$3.77 billion, 13 percent more than August 2021;
- July 2022 collections were \$3.88 billion, 14.7 percent more than July 2021;
- June 2022 collections were 3.68 billion, 16.5 percent more than June 2021;
- May 2022 collections were \$3.69 billion, 8.6 percent more than May 2021;
- April 2022 collections were \$3.83 billion, 12.8 percent more than April 2021;
- March 2022 collections were \$3.37 billion, 28.5 percent more than in March 2021;
- February 2022 collections were \$3.23 billion, 28.6 percent more than in February 2021; and
- January 2022 collections were \$3.85 billion, 25.3 percent more than January 2021.

Comptroller Hegar said, “In line with our biennial revenue forecast, state sales tax collections resumed the recent trend of significant but slowing growth, with the gain compared with the previous year being the lowest since the end of pandemic restrictions two years ago. Growth in tax receipts was evident across all major sectors, with the exception of retail trade, as consumers reallocate budgets away from goods in favor of services as inflation continues to impact shoppers. Receipts from the oil and gas mining sector led the way for all sectors, showing nearly a 50 percent gain for the third straight month. Remittances from the construction sector were up by double digits compared with last March, and receipts from the wholesale trade sector showed gains compared with a year ago, indicating business spending is still very strong in the state. Remittances from the retail trade sector were negative compared with the same month the previous year for the first time since April 2022. Within the sector, general merchandise receipts were down the most compared with last year. Remittances from the sale of building materials declined for the third consecutive month, as the pace of home improvements and remodeling projects that saw enormous increases at the height of the pandemic decidedly slowed. Receipts from clothing and accessory stores were down moderately. Restaurant receipts were up considerably for the second month in a row compared with a year ago, outpacing the inflation rate for food away from home by nearly 50 percent.” Total sales tax revenue for the three months ending in March 2023 was up 8.7 percent compared with the same period a year ago. Sales tax is the largest source of state funding for the state budget, accounting for 56 percent of all tax collections. Texas collected the following revenue from other major taxes:

- motor vehicle sales and rental taxes - \$432 million, up 12 percent from March 2022;
- motor fuel taxes - \$287 million, up 4 percent from March 2022;
- oil production tax - \$427 million, down 10 percent from March 2022;
- natural gas production tax - \$267 million, down 23 percent from March 2022;
- hotel occupancy tax - \$61 million, up 21 percent from March 2022; and
- alcoholic beverage taxes - \$138 million, up 11 percent from March 2022.

Key Dates – 88th Legislative Session:

88th Legislative Session Began: January 10, 2023

Inauguration of Governor and Lt. Governor – January 17, 2023

Bill Filing Deadline: March 10, 2023

88th Legislative Session Ends: May 29, 2023

Governor's Veto Deadline: June 18, 2023

State Websites - Additional information can be obtained via the Senate, House, and capitol websites:

www.senate.state.tx.us

www.house.state.tx.us

www.capitol.state.tx.us